

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for effectuating the shipment and appointment making process between buyers, sellers and third party service providers in a supply community. Any shipping location may create and maintain an appointment calendar within which one or more other participants may seek and select open time slots and request shipping reservations for unreserved slots. Operating hours, peak and off-peak hours, the duration of each dock time slot, any set aside time slots (left unreserved for exception events), and the appointment making lead-time window in the appointment calendar are specified by the shipping location. The shipping location can assign participants specific appointment making privileges and manually review and accept or reject appointment requests for requestors that have not been granted self-appointing privileges. The apparatus includes an internet-based program tool by which any participant can query and view only appointment information relevant to them, but including the entirety of a multi-participant multi-segment tour, such as a continuous move or a multi-stop pick-up and/or delivery shipments to facilitate participant collaboration in the planning of the multi-participant shipment.